

EUROPE · HISTORY · ARCHITECTURE · CITY BREAKS · BEACHES · CULTURE

 Lithuania

Vilnius has one of the largest surviving old towns in central and eastern Europe, a maze of baroque churches, university courtyards and the self-declared Republic of Užupis. Beyond it lie Trakai's island castle, the eerie Hill of Crosses and the Curonian Spit, a UNESCO-listed ribbon of pine forest and drifting dunes on the Baltic. Prices remain well below western Europe's.

 Before you go, read the UK government's travel advice for Lithuania and entry requirements (visas, passport validity). Last updated by FCDO 11 August 2026.

 CAPITAL Vilnius	 CURRENCY Euro (EUR) £1 ≈ €1.19	 LANGUAGE Lithuanian, Russian Polish	 BEST TIME May-Sep
 DAILY BUDGET £40–£180 ££ Moderate	 PLUGS Type C, F 230V · adapter needed	 FLIGHT FROM LONDON 2h 50m direct ~£50–£180 return	 TIME ZONE UTC+2 standard time

Lithuania, the largest and southernmost of the three Baltic states, was once a medieval power: the Grand Duchy stretched to the Black Sea, and its legacy shows in Vilnius's churches and the Polish, Jewish and Russian layers of its history. A week covers the essentials: three days in Vilnius with a half-day at Trakai, a stop in Kaunas for its interwar modernist architecture, then west to the coast at Klaipėda and the Curonian Spit. Drivers can detour north to the Hill of Crosses near Šiauliai on the way.

Costs are well below western Europe's: lunch in a Vilnius canteen or a beer in a courtyard bar costs a fraction of London prices, and mid-range hotels are good value outside summer festival weekends. Crowds are rarely an issue except on the Curonian Spit in July and August. Summer days are long and warm, but winters are dark and cold, often with snow from December to March. Younger Lithuanians speak excellent English, while older people may know Russian or Polish better. The country suits city-breakers, history buffs, cyclists and anyone curious about the Soviet era and its aftermath.

Top 5 highlights

-  ARCHITECTURE

Vilnius Old Town

Gothic St Anne's, the white neoclassical cathedral and dozens of baroque churches fill one of Europe's largest medieval old towns. Wander through Vilnius University's courtyards, pass the Gates of Dawn chapel and cross into bohemian Užupis.
-  NATURE

Curonian Spit

A 98 km sliver of sand and pine forest shared with Russia, the UNESCO-listed spit has some of Europe's highest drifting dunes around Nida, carved wooden figures on the Hill of Witches at Juodkrantė and quiet Baltic beaches.

3

HISTORY

Trakai Island Castle

A red-brick Gothic castle on an island in Lake Galvė, about 30 km west of Vilnius. Trakai is also home to the Karaim, a small Turkic-speaking community whose kibinai pastries are sold all over town.

4

SACRED SITE

Hill of Crosses

Near Šiauliai, more than 100,000 crosses, rosaries and effigies crowd a small hill. Soviet authorities bulldozed it several times, but crosses kept reappearing overnight; Pope John Paul II visited in 1993.

5

HISTORY

Kernavė

A medieval capital of the Grand Duchy, Kernavė is now a UNESCO-listed archaeological site where five steep, grassy hill forts rise above the Neris valley. It makes an easy half-day trip from Vilnius, about 35 km away.

Biggest cities

LARGEST CITY

Vilnius

≈ 600,000 people

Spend at least two days in the UNESCO-listed old town, climbing Gediminas Tower, exploring Užupis and the university courtyards, and confronting the Soviet past at the museum in the former KGB headquarters.

2ND LARGEST CITY

Kaunas

≈ 300,000 people

Lithuania's temporary capital between the wars has a UNESCO-listed collection of 1930s modernist buildings, a red-brick old town and castle, and the sobering Ninth Fort memorial.

3RD LARGEST CITY

Klaipėda

≈ 160,000 people

Lithuania's only seaport has a half-timbered old town shaped by its German past as Memel, and is the jumping-off point for the short ferry across to the Curonian Spit.

Ranked by urban-area population where available. Figures are rounded estimates, and sources define city limits differently, so rankings of similar-sized cities can vary.

When to go to Lithuania

Best time: **May–Sep.**

Jan

Feb

Mar

Apr

May

Jun

Jul

Aug

Sep

Oct

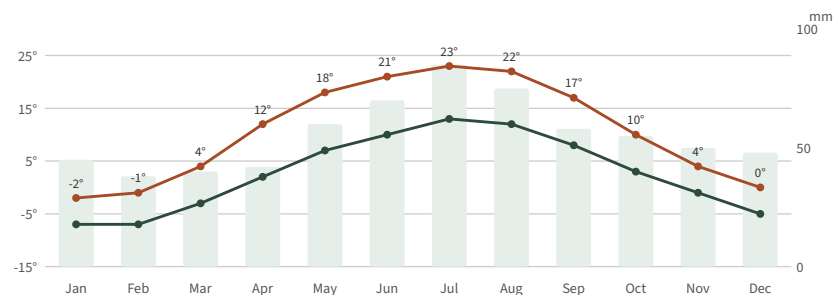
Nov

Dec

■ Best ■ Good ■ Mixed ■ Poor

Average climate in Vilnius

— High °C — Low °C ■ Rain (mm)



Festivals & events

Feb–Mar	Užgavėnės Lithuania's Shrovetide carnival sees masked revellers chase away winter, pancakes eaten in quantity and an effigy called Morė burned; the Rumšiškės open-air museum hosts a large celebration.
Mar	Kaziuko mugė (St Casimir's Fair) Held in Vilnius on the weekend nearest 4 March for centuries, this huge fair fills the old town with crafts, wooden spoons, honey and verbos, woven palms of dried flowers.
Jun	Joninės (Midsummer) On the night of 23–24 June, a public holiday, Lithuanians light bonfires, wear wreaths of oak leaves and flowers, and search the woods for the mythical fern blossom.

How much does Lithuania cost?

SHOESTRING £40 per person / day ≈ €47.61 hostels, street food, buses	MID-RANGE £90 per person / day ≈ €107 3-star hotels, restaurants, some taxis	COMFORTABLE £180 per person / day ≈ €214 4-star+, guided trips, private transfers
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Estimates per person per day, excluding flights. Prices vary by season and city.

Food to try

Cepelinai Large zeppelin-shaped potato dumplings stuffed with minced pork or curd cheese, smothered in a sauce of sour cream and fried bacon bits (spirgai).	Šaltibarščiai A startlingly pink cold soup of beetroot, kefir, cucumber, dill and egg, served in summer with hot boiled potatoes on the side.	Kibinai Crescent-shaped pastries filled with mutton or other meat, brought by the Karaim community and best eaten in a café in Trakai.
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Getting around

LTG Link trains connect Vilnius with Kaunas in about an hour and with Klaipėda in around four, and are clean and cheap. Buses reach everywhere else, including Nida via Klaipėda and the ferry to Smiltynė. In cities, Bolt is cheap and widely used, and Vilnius's buses and trolleybuses take tickets bought through an app. A hire car helps for the Hill of Crosses and national parks.

Practical information

PLUGS & VOLTAGE  C F 230V — bring a UK-to-C/F adapter	EMERGENCY NUMBERS Telephone: 112 (ambulance, fire, police) Source: FCDO “Getting help”
DIALLING CODE +370	TIME ZONE UTC+2 (standard time)

TAP WATER

Generally safe to drink

DRIVING

On the right

TIPPING

Around 10% is normal in restaurants for good service but not obligatory; round up for taxis and in cafés.

ETIQUETTE

Bring an odd number of flowers as a gift, since even numbers are for funerals. Remove shoes in homes, and don't assume people want to speak Russian; start in English or with a few words of Lithuanian.

MAIN AIRPORTS

Vilnius Airport (VNO), Vilnius; Kaunas Airport (KUN), Kaunas; Palanga Airport (PLQ), Palanga

Visas & entry for Lithuania

Shown for a British passport.

No visa needed

You can travel without a visa to the Schengen area, which includes Lithuania, for up to 90 days in any 180-day period. This applies if you travel: as a tourist; to visit family or friends; to attend business meetings, cultural or sports events; for short-term studies or training.

The requirements for working in Lithuania are different.

From the UK government's FCDO entry requirements for British passport holders — read the full page for passport validity, permits and exceptions.

Health & vaccinations



See a travel health nurse, GP or travel clinic **6–8 weeks before you go**. Make sure routine UK vaccinations (such as MMR and diphtheria-tetanus-polio) are up to date.

RECOMMENDED FOR MOST TRAVELLERS

Tetanus

SOMETIMES ADVISED — DEPENDS ON YOUR TRIP, ACTIVITIES AND HEALTH

Hepatitis B

Rabies

Tick-borne encephalitis

Tuberculosis

YELLOW FEVER CERTIFICATE

No yellow fever certificate is required to enter.

MALARIA

No malaria risk

Source: TravelHealthPro (National Travel Health Network and Centre), checked 21 October 2026. This is a summary, not medical advice.

Public holidays in Lithuania

The next 12 months. Banks, offices and some sights may close, and transport and hotels get busy around these dates.

Sun 1 Nov 2026

All Saints' Day

Mon 2 Nov 2026

All Souls' Day

Thu 24 Dec 2026	Christmas Eve
Fri 25 Dec 2026	Christmas Day
Sat 26 Dec 2026	Second Day of Christmas
Fri 1 Jan 2027	New Year's Day
Tue 16 Feb 2027	Day of Restoration of the State of Lithuania
Thu 11 Mar 2027	Day of Restoration of Independence of Lithuania
Sun 28 Mar 2027	Easter Sunday
Mon 29 Mar 2027	Easter Monday
Sat 1 May 2027	International Workers' Day
Sun 2 May 2027	Mother's Day
Sun 6 Jun 2027	Father's Day
Thu 24 Jun 2027	Day of Dew and Saint John
Tue 6 Jul 2027	Statehood Day
Sun 15 Aug 2027	Assumption Day

National holidays only. Dates based on lunar calendars can move by a day or two depending on official announcements.

Useful phrases in Lithuanian

ENGLISH	LITHUANIAN	SAY IT
Hello	Laba diena	<i>LAH-bah dyeh-NAH</i>
Thank you	Ačiū	<i>AH-chyoo</i>
Please	Prašau	<i>prah-SHOW</i>
Excuse me	Atsiprašau	<i>aht-sih-prah-SHOW</i>
How much is this?	Kiek tai kainuoja?	<i>kyek tie kai-NWOH-yah</i>

Know before you go

Cars pay an ecological fee at the Alksnynė checkpoint to enter the Curonian Spit and use Klaipėda's New Ferry terminal; foot passengers and cyclists take the Old Ferry from near the old town.

Many museums close on Mondays, and some on Tuesdays as well, so check opening hours before planning a day around one.

Book accommodation in Nida months ahead for July and August, when the spit's few villages fill with Lithuanian and German holidaymakers.

Visa, health and safety rules change. Before you book or travel, check the FCDO travel advice (gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice) and TravelHealthPro (travelhealthpro.org.uk). Costs are estimates. © 2026 Pick My Trip.